

The Parish of Redgrave cum Botesdale with the Rickinghalls

comprising the churches of:

St Mary's Rickinghall Inferior

All Saints' Redgrave

St Botolph's Chapel of Ease Botesdale



with



The Benefice of North Hartismere

comprising the parishes of:

St Mary's Brome with St Nicholas Oakley

St Mary of Pity Burgate

St Peter's Palgrave

All Saints' Stuston

St Margaret of Antioch Thrandeston

St Mary the Virgin Wortham



CONTENTS

- 3 Welcome from the Rural Dean
- 4 What we are looking for
- 5 What we can offer
Challenges
- 6 The Rectory
- 7 Current Services
- 8 Schools
- 8 Parish of Redgrave cum Botesdale
with the Rickinghalls (RBR)
- 10 North Hartismere Benefice (NHB)

The Churches:

- 14 St Mary's Church Rickinghall
- 15 Chapel of Ease Botesdale
- 16 All Saints' Redgrave
- 17 St Peter's Palgrave
- 18 All Saints' Stuston
- 19 St Mary of Pity Burgate
- 20 St Mary the Virgin Wortham
- 21 St Margaret of Antioch Thrandeston
- 22 St Mary's Brome with St Nicholas Oakley

Deanery and Diocese:

- 23 The Deanery
- 24 The Diocese - Growing in God - Lightwave



Confirmation Candidates December 2023

A warm welcome from the Rural Dean

As Rural Dean, it is a real privilege to share and to promote the very special opportunities for ministry and Growing in God in these ten beautiful parishes. Situated in the lovely countryside of North Suffolk, there is ready access to technology, good jobs and amenities as well as to Norwich, Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds. Stansted Airport and London are easily accessed from nearby Diss. Our towns and villages offer both rural and coastal locations with local shops, pubs and cafés. Suffolk also has great schools, wide open skies and countryside for outdoor activities, cultural and historical attractions, as well as communities that are safe to live in.

The members of these ten churches have pulled together magnificently whilst being without a Priest in Charge and are greatly looking forward to encouraging and supporting the new incumbent.

Revd Canon Susan Loxton
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Explanation about the combination of parishes

Having worked both with the united parish of *Redgrave cum Botesdale with the Rickinghalls* and with *North Hartismere Benefice* we believe that joining them together under one incumbent, with a supportive ministry team, will bring advantages:

- A larger ministry team of clergy, lay ministers and lay elders, some of whom are already in place, will bring an energy and variety of ministry. It is so much better to work collaboratively with colleagues, people to share ministry, concerns, ideas and challenges with.
- The parish share, which both benefices have struggled to pay in the last few years, will be a lot less and so take some of the pressure off the parishes.
- As the parish share will be lower, there might be a possibility to put money aside for mission with the goal of paying a family or pioneer worker part time; this has been successfully achieved in another benefice in the deanery.

We believe, with our Archdeacon and the Bishops, that this is the right combination of parishes. We are encouraged that the parishes themselves are committed to a united future sharing the strengths shown in their combined profiles, and they will look forward to working with their new incumbent to make the vision of unity a reality.

The deanery team will offer as much support as we can: we have not made a pastoral reorganisation order as this is a trial arrangement and if, after a year or two, it needs rearranging slightly we will be able to do that as it will not be legally binding.

What we are looking for

We are hoping that this position will appeal to someone who:

- is enthusiastic about the opportunities and challenges of rural ministry
- is caring, kind and a good listener
- is able to engage with people of all ages and all sections of society, both inside and outside of the church
- will develop our ministry and mission among families and young people, taking an active part in pastoral care
- has a passion for the Gospel, and is able to make the message of Jesus relevant and comprehensible to those with little or no knowledge of the scriptures
- will reach out to the local community in mission, grow our ministry and develop a range of spirituality
- is visible in the parishes
- will enable and inspire both ordained and lay members of the parishes who minister here
- is realistic about their time and energy limitations and is happy to collaborate with and encourage others in sharing the work load

Our vision for the future is not to just grow in numbers but to reach out into the community with the Gospel, and for all to develop a closer relationship with God. We would love our new priest in charge to help us make our vision a reality.



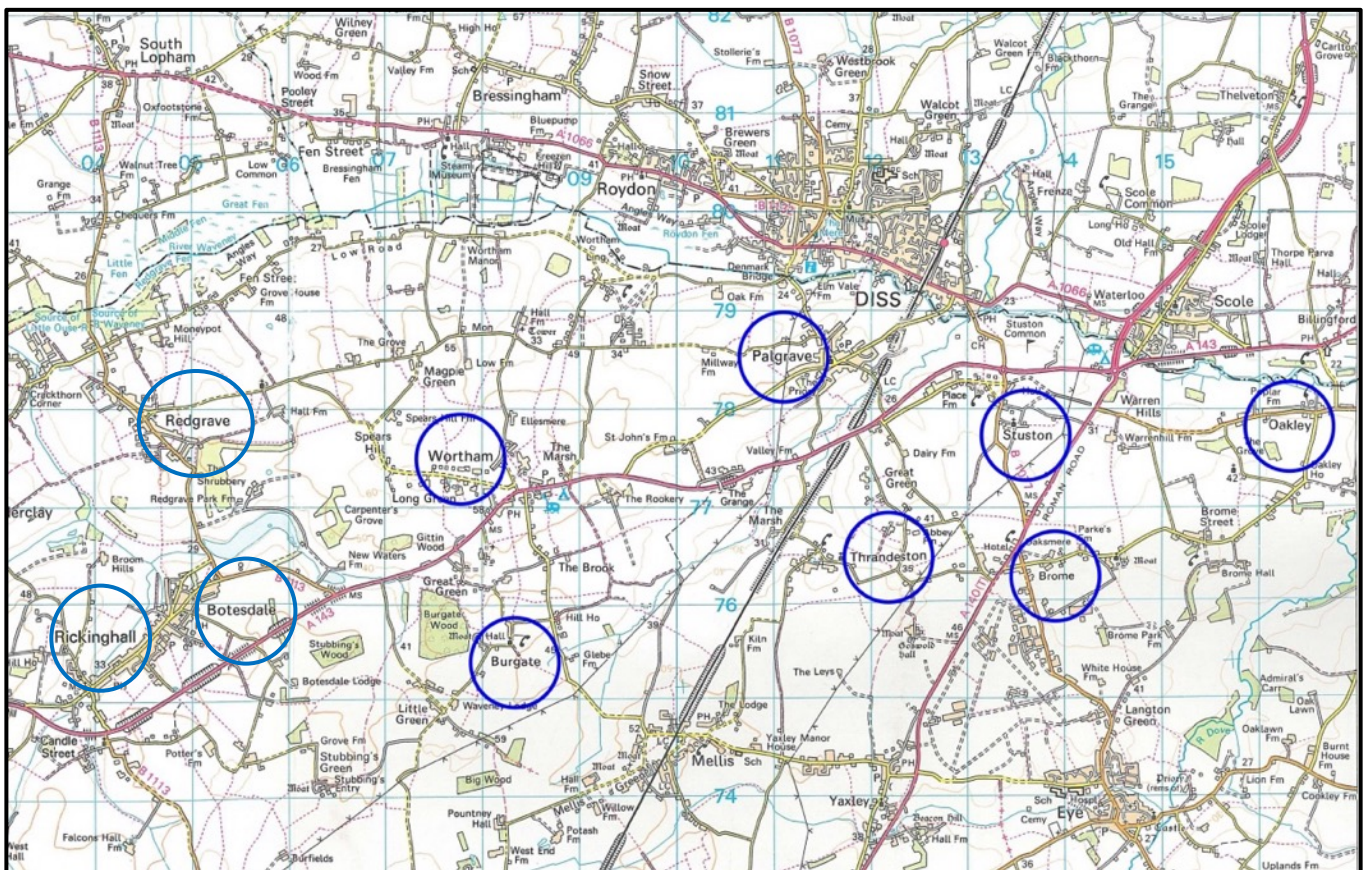
Strawberry Tea to celebrate the 90th birthday of Queen Elizabeth II

What we can offer

- We offer you our support and participation in worship, welcome and service
- We are prepared to adopt new styles and patterns of worship to appeal to a younger demographic and are amenable to new ideas
- We will respect your need for personal time and space
- Across RBR and NHB we have many talented people among our congregations including excellent cooks, artists, musicians and flower arrangers
- We have several Friends Groups supporting the fabric of the churches

Challenges

- Geographical distance between the parishes
- Reaching out to the wider community
- Establishing a closer relationship with the community school at Wortham
- Developing the emerging signs of collaboration between the PCCs



Map showing positions of the villages

The Rectory

The Rickinghall Rectory, which will be the rectory for the combined benefice, has easy access to the A143. It is a five bedroom property, the principal having an ensuite and the family bathroom has a bath and separate shower cubicle.

The kitchen and utility room were fully refurbished in 2019 and there is space for a dishwasher, electric cooker (no gas) and washing machine / tumble dryer.

There is a large study to the front of the house with cloakroom located in the adjacent hallway.



The property is in good order with many of the rooms being redecorated during the vacancy.

There is a large rear garden of approximately half an acre and to the front, a gravel driveway with space for several cars and a garage.

The house is heated by oil fired central heating but is also fitted with solar panels which provide the benefit of free electricity when they are generating.



Current Services

Redgrave, Botesdale with the Rickinghalls

First Sunday

Holy Communion (CW) 8.45am
St Mary's Rickinghall

Second Sunday

Holy Communion (CW) 10.30am
All Saints Redgrave

Third Sunday

Holy Communion (CW) 10.30am
St Mary's Rickinghall

Fourth Sunday

Holy Communion (CW) 10.30am
St Botolph's Chapel of Ease,
Botesdale

Fifth Sunday

RBR: United service rotates with
Methodists & Park View Chapel

NHB: Benefice Holy Communion
service rotates around the six
parishes

North Hartismere Benefice

First Sunday

Holy Communion/Morning Worship 9.30am
Thrandeston

Holy Communion/Morning Worship 11.00am
Palgrave

Reflective Evening Prayer 6.00pm
Brome or Oakley

Second Sunday

Holy Communion/Morning Worship 11.00am
Palgrave

Holy Communion/Morning Worship 11.00am
Wortham

Third Sunday

Breakfast Church 9.00am
Brome & Oakley Village Hall

Holy Communion/Morning Worship 9.30am
Burgate

Holy Communion/Morning Worship 11.00am
Palgrave

Fourth Sunday

Holy Communion/Morning Worship 9.30am
Stuston

Holy Communion/Morning Worship 9.30am
Brome or Oakley

Holy Communion/Morning Worship 11.00am
Palgrave

Cafe Church (Lay lead) 11.00am
Burgate

Schools

Our area has three primary schools, in Palgrave, Botesdale and Wortham. Wortham is a Community School and is part of the All Saints Schools Trust. Both Palgrave and Botesdale are CEVCP with the former being part of The Tilian Partnership.

They are all in the catchment area for Hartismere School which is situated on the outskirts of Eye, a small market town off the A140, travelling from Diss towards Ipswich. The school is academically high performing and therefore popular.

Pre-school education is accommodated locally with a number of quality groups including a pre-school run from Botesdale Village Hall and a Montessori nursery in Stuston.

The Parish of Redgrave cum Botesdale with the Rickinghalls

We are a united Parish, Redgrave cum Botesdale and the Rickinghalls set in the north of Suffolk near the Waveney valley. We have excellent road links to Norwich, Ipswich and Cambridge, with a nearby rail station in Diss with frequent trains to London and Norwich. This is a community of approximately 2500 people and growing with local building development in all the villages.

There are three pubs, one with accommodation, a Co-op supermarket and local store, excellent Health Centre, hairdressers and beauty salon, village halls and two recreation grounds, a fish and chip shop, a Chinese takeaway, and a café.

Botesdale has a CEVCP school, with secondary schools nearby. There are several care homes in the vicinity and the nearest hospitals are Bury St Edmunds and the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital.

On the fifth Sunday we join as a community with the local Methodist church and Park View Chapel for a United service, as well as sharing the Easter Walk of Witness and Remembrance Sunday Service.

We have monthly coffee mornings for all the community, also shared between the churches, and go into the Primary School for 'Open the Book'.

This is a very friendly and growing community of new builds with many people moving here and not wanting to move away.

There are a variety of clubs to join from the WI to a gardening club, most of whom advertise in the monthly Parish Magazine, an invaluable source of information and delivered free to every house in the villages.

As a church community we have had 'Away Days' to King's Lynn, Knettishall Heath and High Lodge at Thetford.

Our Churches & Congregations

Our three Parish churches are a united Parish, upholding the Five marks of Mission and our Diocesan teaching of Growing in God. We mix traditional worship with evangelical services. There is a thriving ecumenical scene and we regularly support the Methodist Church and Park View Chapel at Botesdale with services and other events.

The Parish has been wonderfully assisted by retired and external clergy since August 2022 when our Priest was unable to work due to long Covid -19.

We look to the future to be accountable for the care and maintenance of our churches and to serve our community with God's help.

As Christians many have served in other churches and are attracted to this Parish and its traditions.

We are eager to recognise the gifts of the laity and wish to encourage new Readers and Elders to be trained and appointed to work alongside the incumbent.

Mission and Ministry has been taught and implemented by activities including:

- House Study and Prayer groups
- Prayer Chains
- Open House (monthly coffee mornings)
- Open The Book with St Botolph's CEVCP School
- The Parish Magazine
- Fund Raising Events like Art Exhibitions
- Friends of St Mary's Rickingham
- Suffolk Historic Churches Trust 'Ride & Stride'

- Promotions through Parish news outlets
- Welcome Packs to new arrivals in the parishes
- We have begun to build the framework for a new website with potential webmaster

We are looking forward to working with North Hartismere Benefice.



Art Exhibition August 2021 St Mary's, Rickinghall

North Hartismere Benefice

The Benefice of North Hartismere comprises six rural parishes (seven ancient churches) and was created in 1989. It lies in and around the Waveney Valley on the border of Suffolk with Norfolk near the market town of Diss.

Diss is within easy reach, with main line trains to either London (1½ hours) or Norwich (17 mins.), with the latter also having an excellent regional airport. Diss has a choice of supermarkets, independent shops, restaurants and pubs and farm shops nearby. A market is held on Fridays and Diss Auction Rooms regularly feature in such programmes as Antiques Road Trip, Bargain Hunt and Cash in the Attic.

Local sporting and leisure facilities include a leisure centre with swimming pool, various gyms, and rugby, football, cricket, bowls, tennis and squash clubs. There is also an 18-hole golf club and driving range.

There are pockets of deprivation in the locality indicated by the continued need for the Foodbank which struggles at times to keep up with demand and Diss Salvation Army has an annual Christmas Toys and Tins appeal for struggling families. Refugees were housed for a few months in a hotel in one of our parishes and we responded by organising a 'tea party' so we could meet each other and later by making a collection to buy them all Christmas gifts.

The average attendance each Sunday across the Benefice is about 50 but in December 2023 over 400 people attended a Carol Service or the Crib Service in our churches, indicating that there is the potential to reach out to more families in our communities.

When services restarted after Covid, Palgrave was allotted a service every Sunday, being the church most central to the Benefice and this has continued.

We are looking forward to working alongside the Parish of Redgrave cum Botesdale with the Rickinghalls and pooling our individual strengths. We hope you enjoy getting to know us a little and if you feel you might be the right person to guide us into the future then we would love to meet you.



Youngsters helping at a Stuston service

Ministry Team

- Rev Ginny Manning *SSM PTO*
- Graham Reardon *Reader PTO*
- Adrian and Hilary Mitchell *Lay Elders commissioned 2023*
- Local retired clergy
- Pool of Lay people who regularly assist with services

Lay Support

- Administrator & Benefice Safeguarding Officer whose responsibilities include:

- Compiling services rotas & service lists
- Undertaking all marriage documentation
- Maintaining records of baptisms and funerals
- Taking minutes at Benefice meetings
- Overseeing submission of Statistics for Mission entries
- Maintaining Benefice Website

- Benefice Treasurer

- Six Churchwardens and Parochial Church Councils

Groups

‘Open the Book’ team meets weekly during term time at Wortham School. Palgrave School run their own OTB sessions, originally started by church members.

House group Started in 2022 and meets fortnightly in a home setting.

Prayer Chain Prayer requests are passed along a ‘chain’ of ten people

Benefice Choir The choir rehearses in St. Peter’s Church once a fortnight and endeavours to enhance worship at special services held within the Benefice and elsewhere when invited. The choir currently numbers 25.

Bell ringers Mainly come from outside the Benefice and are available for weddings at Oakley (six bells) and Palgrave (eight bells)

Benefice Sunday Club meets on the first Sunday of the month at Wortham Village Hall. It is open to children of all ages throughout the local villages and includes stories, prayers, games and craft activities, followed by drinks and biscuits.



Children working on a craft project

Social outreach

Help for Hope Benefice run monthly coffee morning, held at Palgrave Community Centre, which donates any money raised to assorted charities. “Help for Hope” attracts people who do not normally come to church as well as church members from around the Benefice.

Kettle’s On Monthly social gathering at Burgate Church Hall

Community Lunch Monthly at Brome & Oakley Village Hall

Media outreach

Website is in the early stages of redevelopment
<https://www.northhartismerebenefice.org.uk/>

Magazine bimonthly, delivered to the majority of households in the Benefice

Sunday Sheet emailed to over 120 people with printed copies in church

Christmas card to every household

Outward Giving

- Diocesan Lent appeal
- Harvest donations especially for the Waveney Foodbank
- British Legion at Remembrance
- Salvation Army Christmas Food & Toy Appeal
- Suffolk Historic Churches Trust “Ride & Stride”
- Individual church charity donations
- Donations from ‘Help for Hope’ coffee mornings



Collection of tools for Africa

St Mary's Church, Rickinghall Inferior *



The church with its Norman round tower is set in the centre of a large churchyard with many trees and a wide expanse of grass, giving it a most peaceful atmosphere.

The October 2023 flooding and the current restoration works of replacing the North Chancel Roof (at a cost of £65,000 which was raised in full) have tested our Church Services but none has been cancelled!

Our reduced financial reserves and desire to introduce kitchen and modern facilities mean we will start developing a major Appeal for Funds during 2024 which will be led by the Friends of Rickinghall Church.



** There are two Rickinghall's, Superior and Inferior, and each has a church dedicated to St Mary. 'Superior' is the equivalent of 'Upper' while 'Inferior' is 'Lower'. Rickinghall Superior is redundant and under the care of the Churches Conservation Trust.*

All Saints' Redgrave

Before 1897 winter evening services for the Parish were being held in the school and private houses as the main church, St Mary's Redgrave, was a long way from the village. Various events were held to raise money with the shortfall being given by the Rector, Rev. Thomas Holt Wilson, and the building opened for worship on 12th September 1897.



Around the font at a Baptism at All Saints, Redgrave

When St. Mary's was made redundant in 2005 the Mission Room, as it was previously known, was refurbished and consecrated as the new Parish Church of All Saints' in 2007.

The refurbishment allowed the installation of a vestry, a kitchen and toilet facilities as well as a new heating system. This provides a comfortable place for services and other meetings. It is also available for letting purposes for other village groups.

St Botolph's Chapel of Ease, Botesdale



There has been a place of worship on this small site since at least 1283, originally built as a market chapel called St Botolph's Chapel.

As well as being used as a religious building it was also used to carry out business and as a school, probably established by the Abbot of Bury St Edmunds to teach boys, who would then enter the church becoming clerks and later chaplains.

There are many references to the Chapel in wills and other documents from the 15th century. In the early 16th century it became a chantry chapel, noted by the inscription above the door.

In 1561 Sir Nicholas Bacon founded a free Grammar school there. The house was built next door to house the Master and the boarding pupils. A desk formerly from the Grammar school is now in St Mary's Church, Redgrave. It has many names and initials carved into it by schoolboys over several generations. They also carved their names or initials on timbers in the Chapel House, the earliest being 'William Sayer, aged 11, 1609'.



In 1883 The Old Grammar School was sold by private contract and conveyed to the trustees to be used for Church of England services. It was repaired and enlarged and continued as a Chapel of Ease to the Parish Church of Redgrave.

It is now used monthly for worship. The chancel was re-ordered to enable the communion rail to be removed in order to have concerts, exhibitions and other events in the chapel, which lends itself admirably to these occasions.

St Peter's, Palgrave



Palgrave is a village situated on the Norfolk/Suffolk border and Saint Peter's Church is in the centre of the village. Palgrave Primary School is next to the church and the Church puts forward two Foundation Governors, of which the incumbent is one. They use our premises on a regular basis for 'Open the Book', school assemblies and other activities and we as a Church lead collective worship for the school regularly.

We hold a service in the Church every Sunday at 11.00am, which is normally a service of Community Worship with Holy Communion. Approximately 20 to 35 people attend our morning service, and the congregation can include people from other churches in the Benefice on Sundays when they do not have a service in their own Church. Power point presentations are used for most of our services, so there is normally no need for hymn books or service sheets. Most of the congregation stay for light refreshments after the service. Approximately four years ago the layout of the interior was updated, and a new tea point was installed. We hope to install a toilet in the church at some time in the future but presently have a Portaloo!

During the past two years two young people have been confirmed, partly as a result from receiving excellent teaching through 'Open the Book' at the Church school.

We have two Lay Elders in our Palgrave congregation who were commissioned in May 2023 and who assist in leading services in the Benefice as and when required.

A Friends of Palgrave Church organisation was started about eight years ago. Several successful events were held before lockdown, which - with membership subscriptions - helped to pay for the new 'tea point'. The Friends more recently funded a laptop, for digital Sunday services, and one of two new altar frontals.

In roughly alternate years, St Peter's has held a Gift Day; donations to which are largely directed towards building maintenance or improvement. This is well-supported in the village. During, and in spite of, Covid restrictions we staged two second-hand book sales; filling the pews with all manner of good quality books. This was a new venture and proved very popular. In some way it is hoped that those occasional visitors will at least have found the Church welcoming and accessible.

A Community Centre was built by volunteers in 1984 and has been a hub for social activities ever since, including a monthly cinema slot and the venue for the Help for Hope coffee mornings. Palgrave is thus served by a Parish Council, a Parochial Church Council and a Community Centre Committee. The latter produces a good quality village magazine, the Palgrave Star, free to all households monthly. Residents of Palgrave can reach the amenities of Diss on foot via a pleasant surfaced pathway which crosses the River Waveney and into Norfolk.

All Saints', Stuston

Stuston is a small Parish spread across a wide area with most houses situated around the Common. There are about 80 properties in all, mostly detached houses, including some ex-farmworkers' cottages, six ex-council houses and a small number of rental properties. The population of about 210 includes around 30 children. There are currently 19 people on the Electoral Roll of the Church.

Most of the land is farmed but there is also a large 150 acre Common available for walking which contains an 18 hole golf course.

There is also a golf driving range. There are a number of small businesses within the village including a garage, petrol station, M & S convenience store and, centred around Place Farm a farm shop, other retail units, and an activity centre and coffee shop. There is a Montessori Nursery School which attracts children from Stuston and further afield.



All Saints' is a small medieval church set in a well managed churchyard. Formerly on the 'At Risk' list, it has been greatly restored over the last 15 years and now, being in a generally sound condition, has been removed from the list. The work was carried out using mainly money from grant aiding bodies with some local support. The Church is the only sizeable meeting place in the village and, as well as for services, it is available for other village events and meetings as well as our monthly coffee mornings which are arranged by the PCC and the Village Social Committee working together. There is a strong historical link with Thrandeston and worshippers frequently attend services in the other parishes in the Benefice.

Village Summer BBQ



Village Christmas Eve Tinsel Walk at Stuston

St Mary of Pity, Burgate



There are about 71 properties, primarily private ownership. The village is divided into two areas of common land, Great Green and Little Green with the Church and Church Hall located centrally. There are 24 people on the electoral roll of which 11 are non-resident. This is a 14th century decorated gothic church building that is well maintained. It is heated and has a kitchen area and toilet. The Church Hall is within 100 yards of the Church.

We have one service per month at the church with an average attendance of ten adults and one child. We also have a lay run Café Church held once a month at the church hall with an average attendance of ten adults and three children. About ten children live in the parish.

Kettles On, a church run coffee morning, takes place at the Church Hall on the third Tuesday of each month with an average attendance of 25-30. This provides a valuable outreach to additional members of the community in a warm, friendly space for companionship and conversation.

The Church Hall is owned by the PCC, it has one large meeting room plus a smaller meeting room along with a modern well-equipped kitchen, storage room, heating, and accessible toilets. As well as using it for our own functions and fundraising, we hire it out as often as we can to help with the running costs.

We rely heavily on volunteers to clean and maintain both the Church and the Church Hall along with a mowing rota of mainly retired gentlemen who kindly volunteer to keep the churchyard reasonably under control. We have recently set up an area of the churchyard as a wildlife garden.



Burgate Church Hall



A summer wedding at Burgate

We have a small but active PCC and hold a yearly Christmas Fayre and Spring Garden Sale at the Church along with various other fundraising activities throughout the year.

The Church has a page on the Wortham and Burgate community website

<http://www.worthamandburgate.suffolk.cloud/>

St Mary the Virgin, Wortham

St Mary's is in the geographical centre of Wortham, between the five hamlets of Long Green, the Marsh, Magpie Green, the Ling and the Brook. The Church has a car park, a small kitchen area and a WC and is kept open 24/7 and is much appreciated by visitors and walkers using the Angles Way which passes through the churchyard. Over half the population of Wortham falls into the 18-64 age bracket.



The main business of the area is agriculture, and Howard Nurseries, who provide many plants for the Chelsea Flower Show, lies between Wortham and Burgate. They employ local people and offer work experience to older children and historically they have been very supportive of both our churches. Wortham Post Office Stores lies just off the A143 and has a Tea Room attached, both of which are well patronized and there are also many smaller home-based enterprises.

We worship and work well with the other parishes and have strong historical links with Burgate with whom we share the primary school and Parish Council.

'Welcome Pack' is delivered to all new residents which includes a copy of the Benefice magazine, and St Mary's has a page on the website on which contacts and upcoming services are listed: <http://www.worthamandburgate.suffolk.cloud/>

The 'Friends of Wortham Church' was established in 1995 to raise funds for the Church fabric and their support has proved invaluable over the years. Currently the nave roof needs completely replacing and in conjunction with the Friends a new website has been set up at worthamchurchappeal.org and there are associated Facebook and Instagram pages.



Launch of roof appeal by the Friends of Wortham Church



Village sign, inspired by the church tower

St Margaret of Antioch, Thrandeston



Like many of its Suffolk neighbours, our Church has been in use for Christian worship for more than seven centuries; it also has a special atmosphere and beauty of its own, standing just off Little Green and near the heart of our small village. St Margaret of Antioch is a Grade 1 listed building. The Church has a Church Hall close by which is leased to the Village Hall Association.

The population is made up of a small number of families and many retired people, spread across the parish but mainly centred around the very pretty Village Green. Housing is all private. There are a few very ancient houses around the village and also six working farms, with one or two other small businesses, including holiday lets. We do not have a village school and children attend schools in nearby villages and towns.

Churchmanship is traditional and evangelical. Members of the congregation attend services across the Benefice and three members are involved with the Benefice Choir. The number on the Electoral Roll stands at 16. We have been encouraged since changing to 9.30 am on the first Sunday of the month and this attracts others from across the Benefice. A warm welcome is always given to visitors from other parishes.



Christmas Wreath making

We try to make sure that the Parish News is distributed to every house in the village, and we know that this is much appreciated by the villagers.

We have an established 'Friends of Thrandeston Church' and the village supports us in our fund-raising events. Our wonderful Church is on the Heritage at Risk Register and needs urgent repairs to the Chancel Roof. We have been thrilled to be awarded grants to the value of over £50,000 to enable the roof work to be started in the spring of 2024.



Apple Day

Brome & Oakley

St Mary's, Brome



St Nicholas, Oakley



There are about 200 properties, ranging from 3 to 400 years old. There are 24 people on the 2023 electoral roll, of which five are non-resident. The villages of Brome and Oakley go back at least to Saxon times. St Mary's Church, which was restored in Victorian times, is in fact an ancient building; part of it predates the Norman Conquest and it is possible that a timber church stood here in the 8th century. The lower section of the tower is Saxon – one of the 43 round towers still remaining in Suffolk. The Church of St Nicholas, Oakley (Magna) is possibly on an 8th century site and certainly Norman. There was also St Andrew's Oakley (Parva), demolished in 1440, which could have been even older. In the 14th century, Robert Bucton, Lord of the Manor, built the 60 foot tower.

The parishes were united by the Bishop of Norwich in 1751, but both churches were retained and have remained in use. Brome and Oakley are both ribbon developments without a village centre and this sometimes makes it difficult to generate a unity of purpose. They are located mid-distance between Eye in Suffolk and Diss in Norfolk, each about three miles away. They are friendly places and the established residents easily accept strangers. Several families have lived in the area for generations, and many are related.



Fun Dog Show at Summer Fete

Worship currently takes place once or twice each month with some parishioners attending services at Palgrave on other Sundays. There is a "Breakfast Church" every month held in the Village Hall. The Village Hall, which was the old Village School, is located on Brome Street near the boundary between Brome and Oakley. There is a well-attended Social Club that meets every Friday evening. The village hall, with the church, provides a "Community lunch" each month with soup, cheese, and a good selection of puddings, each attended by up to seventy residents mostly from both villages and some from further afield.

Other features include: a branch of the Trussell Trust foodbank network, currently situated on the industrial estate; a Church & Village Summer Fete, and a Church Christmas Fair. Well attended coffee mornings are held once a month in the Village Hall.

The Deanery - *Working together to make a difference*

Hartismere and Hoxne Deanery was formed in 2021 by the merger of two adjacent deaneries which had worked closely together for many years. It now comprises 39 parishes in six benefices, all very rural apart from the small town of Eye.

Benefices are encouraged to have their own plans for growth, within the overall diocesan vision of 'flourishing congregations making a difference'. Our deanery objectives are the encouragement of gifts and vocations, development of discipleship and spirituality, community engagement and growth of work with families.

The deanery is blessed with a good number of SSMs, Lay Readers, active priests with PTO and committed commissioned lay elders.

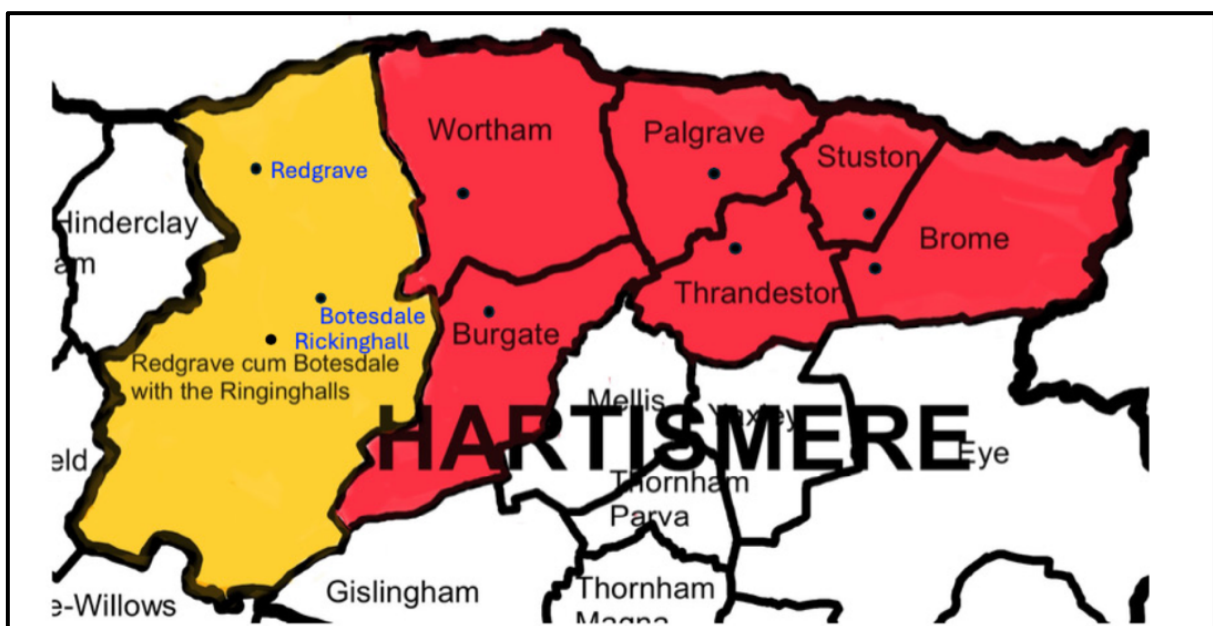
Deanery Synod meetings are held three times a year: business is kept to a minimum with more time given to interesting and relevant speakers. Meetings are well attended and there is time for fellowship over refreshments. Churches of the deanery also meet for some shared services.

Chapter meetings for clergy are every 4-6 weeks and twice a year we invite all the retired priests: Chapter is where we support and learn and pray together. We are excited about the future, believing that this is a time for growth. Come and join us in God's mission in this beautiful part of Suffolk. We look forward to working with you!

Rural Dean: Revd Canon Susan Loxton

Assistant Rural Dean: Revd Canon Eleanor Goodison

Lay Chair: Mary Lewis



Parish Areas

The Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich

Where are we?

The Diocese covers the county of Suffolk, excluding the area around Lowestoft in the north-east, and one parish in Essex. It is a mainly rural Diocese with a large number of small villages, plus market towns including Woodbridge, Halesworth, Sudbury and Beccles and the cathedral town of Bury St Edmunds with its historic ruins of the old Abbey. Ipswich is the county town with a population of about 137,000. Suffolk's population is c 650,000. The county embraces historic places of interest such as Sutton Hoo, culture at Snape with the famous annual Aldeburgh music festival, is on the Heritage coast and is a haven for lovers of natural history and birdlife. The busy port of Felixstowe is at the end of the A14 which runs via Cambridge to the Midlands and the A12 which gives access to London and the Norfolk Broads.

Who are we?

We are often known as 'the Church of England in Suffolk'. The diocesan bishop is the Right Reverend Martin Seeley, and the suffragan bishop is the Right Reverend Dr Mike Harrison. Both work from the Bishop's House in Ipswich. They work together closely to help us shape our vision and strategy, and amongst a plethora of other tasks offer regular teaching mornings to nurture the faith of people in our congregations – and a regular Vlog which can be found on Facebook. There are 3 archdeaconries and over 450 churches where visitors will find a wide range of worshipping styles, from the traditional to contemporary, as well as Fresh Expressions and growing numbers of 'Lightwave' groups for those who haven't connected with traditional church previously. The Cathedral of St Edmund and St James in Bury St Edmunds is the mother church of the Diocese and is proactive in offering support to clergy and parishes including welcoming parishes on pilgrimage. We also work closely with our 88 Church of England primary schools. All this is, of course, supported by a small and committed diocesan staff based in the diocesan office in Ipswich.

What is our vision?

Our diocesan vision is to be 'Growing in God', aiming to grow 'flourishing congregations making a difference'. This vision was accepted by Diocesan Synod in 2014 and since then we have been focussing on four key priorities:

- Growing in Depth: responding to the call of Christ in every part of our lives
- Growing in Number: drawing the contacts we have into the life of God's kingdom
- Growing in Influence: reaching beyond ourselves in our impact on the wider world
- Growing Younger; building churches whose age-range reflects our communities

Growing in God

Parishes are encouraged to use a simple Mission Action Planning tool to help us all to focus on these priorities and how they might be worked out in each different context. We are trusting God that this vision, underpinned by a commitment to Christian stewardship, will bear fruit as we look to the future.

As part of this vision, we have recently received Strategic Development Funding for two major projects: Inspiring Ipswich, overseen by the Archdeacon of Ipswich which aims to grow the church in Ipswich through church planting and reaching out to those who live in the town, and 'Growing God in the Countryside', overseen by the Archdeacon for Rural Mission. This focusses on nurturing and discipling new Christians through small Lightwave groups and hubs such as the one being established at Bungay. (The Growing in God in the Countryside project plan is available among the documents at www.light-wave.org/vacancies)

We have also been part of a pilot scheme exploring how we can use our church buildings more creatively both for those who worship regularly and for the benefit of our communities and many churches have benefitted from this.

We are broadening our vision through a growing partnership with the Diocese of Kagera in Tanzania, with fruitful visits and links being established.

How can we fulfil our “Growing in God” vision?

We value our huge range of different ministries: we have over 100 stipendiary clergy, plus many SSM and PTO clergy as well as lay and ordained chaplains who can be found in such diverse places as schools, prisons, hospitals, hospices, the army, RAF and the police. Some clergy are ordained to serve in their local benefice through our pioneering 'auxiliary ordination pathway' which enables people's vocations to ordained ministry to be discerned within the Diocese.

All clergy work alongside lay ministers – Readers, elders, and the growing number people exercising recently introduced licensed ministries: pioneer ministers, evangelists, youth ministers and children's and family workers. Our ministry deployment principles encourage teams or clusters of lay and ordained ministers to work together so that clergy feel less isolated and ministry resources the mission of the church more effectively. We are just beginning to develop the principle of 'local ministers' in our benefices, releasing people's gifts to serve in their locality.

We are excited about these new developments which are playing an important part in our diocesan vision of Growing in God.

So, in summary:

As our Growing in God vision states, we aspire to be people who know that 'God is with us, gathering us as Christ-centred communities, calling us to make Christian disciples, sending us in loving service, empowering us by the Holy Spirit'.

The diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich strongly encourages all incumbents to promote the growth of small missional groups and fresh expressions of Church in their benefices. "Lightwave" has been created with a diocese-wide Bishops Mission Order in order to support clergy and lay people to work together in mission-shaped communities, reaching out in innovative ways.

The Lightwave Community meets in small groups in homes, pubs, offices, schools and other places and complements other ways of being church. The name of the community comes from the idea of lightwaves being the way in which light spreads into dark places. Lightwave is committed to shining the light of Jesus in Suffolk through acts of kindness and practical service as well as worship and witness.

Each lightwave group aims to do one activity together to bless their local community and to share faith in their locality or network. Each group receives support and training in their outreach through a growing network of coaches. Each is mainly concerned to bless people who are exploring faith for the first time, while simultaneously cooperating closely with local parish churches and others. The Lightwave Community is being developed through a Project called "Growing in God in the Countryside" funded by the Strategic Development Unit of the Church Commissioners until 2025. While both urban and rural Christians are part of this community, there is a particular focus on helping 1500 new disciples come to faith in rural areas in the period of the funding. Many Lightwave groups are planting fresh expressions of Church. The understanding is that such fresh expressions of Church will be new or different ways of being established primarily for the benefit of people who are not yet members of any church.

The Lightwave Community is developing three Rural Hub Churches, in different parts of rural Suffolk. These create and support the development of the small missional groups in the whole surrounding area and to intentionally provide sufficient critical mass for particular ministries which are currently under-represented in rural churches, for example with young adults and those in lower income brackets.

The Lightwave chaplaincy team support those involved in farming and rural business. Every part of the Lightwave Community has a vision for the great wave of God's love, bringing light to our county.

loverural

making Jesus visible through loving action

Loverural is about "making Jesus visible through loving action" in the Suffolk Countryside. It is part of the diocese's strong commitment to rural areas. Loverural has 3 strands:-

- a) Drawing attention to the enormous role of the rural Christianity in building social capital
- b) Acting as a convenor for projects and congregations in the countryside including those of different streams and denominations so that good rural practice can be shared and mutual support offered
- c) Enabling those engaged in Christian-based social action to gain confidence and wisdom in how to make exploration of the Christian faith accessible to those engaging with their initiatives

www.lightwave.community